

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Yuma



2015 IMPACT REPORT

SCHOOL SUCCESS BEGINS AT BIRTH



90% OF A CHILD'S CRITICAL BRAIN DEVELOPMENT HAPPENS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN,

so early experiences lay the foundation for success in school and in life. Arizonans created First Things First (FTF) to give more children the tools they need to arrive at school prepared to meet our state's high expectations. FTF provides resources and professional expertise then combines it with local decision-making to build on the work of community organizations impacting children and families. Local volunteers – parents, educators, business professionals, philanthropists, faith leaders and tribal representatives – decide how the funds will be used to best improve school readiness for children in their area.

EARLY CHILDHOOD IS ONE OF THE BEST INVESTMENTS A STATE CAN MAKE

Research by Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman showed that every \$1 invested in early childhood can yield returns between \$4 and \$16. Early literacy and its impact on school success is one of the best examples of the return on investment in early childhood. High quality early learning experiences, rich in language and literacy, reduce early learning gaps and ensure that children are ready to start reading when they enter kindergarten.



Gaps in children's vocabulary start to appear as early as
18 MONTHS.



By the time children are
3 & 4 YEARS OLD,
their vocabulary, attention and
general knowledge are predictors of
THIRD & FOURTH GRADE
reading comprehension.



THIRD GRADE
reading ability is one of the
best predictors of
HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATION.



As an early childhood system partner, First Things First invests in proven programs and innovative strategies that: strengthen families in their role as their child's first teacher; improve the quality of early learning environments like preschool and child care, and expand access to those programs; and, promote prevention and early identification of health problems that could impact learning later on. By getting more Arizona kids ready for school, FTF helps put children on a path to academic success that benefits them, our communities and our state.

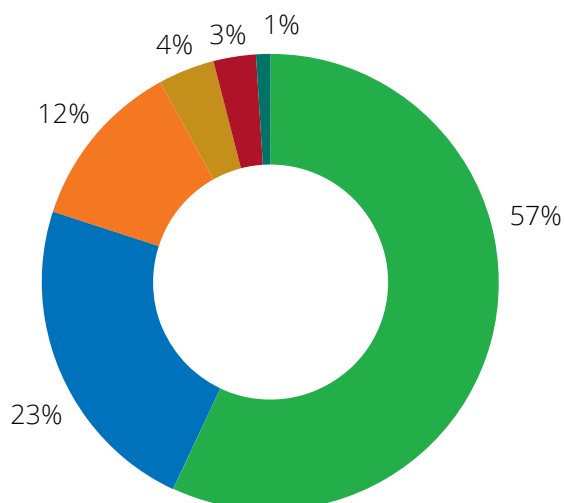
\$1



INVESTED IN EARLY
CHILDHOOD YIELDS UP TO A
\$16 RETURN

FISCAL YEAR 2015 IMPACT

YUMA FY2015 PROGRAM EXPENDITURES



- Quality Preschool and Child Care \$3,570,499.54**
 Children exposed to high quality early learning do better in school and are more likely to graduate.
- Strengthening Families and Early Literacy \$1,435,418.99**
 Families are a child's first and best teachers.
- Preventive Health \$725,687.33**
 Undetected or untreated health issues can impact learning later on.
- Workforce Development and Training \$248,650.22**
 A child's relationships with early caregivers impact whether her brain will develop in ways that promote learning.
- Parent and Community Awareness \$187,640.93**
 We all have a shared responsibility to help children arrive at school prepared to succeed.
- Research and Accountability \$87,348.50**
 Measuring effectiveness and promoting continuous quality improvement rely on robust, accurate data.

Total = \$6,255,245.51

- 1,225** Children had access to a higher standard of early learning through preschool and child care programs participating in quality first.
- 812** Infants, toddlers and preschoolers received scholarships to access high quality early learning through preschool or child care.
- 4,200** Families of newborns left the hospital with tools to help them support their child's health and learning.
- 659** Families received voluntary in-home visits from trained providers to enhance their parenting skills and deal with specific challenges, including first-time parenting, parenting a child with special needs, or dealing with multiple births.
- 126** Parents and other caregivers attended community-based classes on early literacy.
- 139** Adults providing care for young children in their homes attended classes on parenting skills, brain development, early literacy and nutrition.
- 5,130** Fluoride varnishes applied to protect against dental decay.
- 774** Screenings completed to detect vision, hearing and developmental issues in young kids and prevent learning challenges later on.

INVESTING IN SCHOOL READINESS



HOME VISITATION HELPS YUMA MOM PREPARE DAUGHTER FOR KINDERGARTEN

Marilyn Urias was 19 when she gave birth to her second child, but this time it was very different.

Her parents provided tremendous support after her first son Joseph was born. She was living with her parents in Yuma and they cared for her son while she worked full-time and attended school full-time. She would see her son at night when she came home.

When Urias, who was married, but separated from her husband, became pregnant with her second child, her parents told her she was on her own.

Urias was scared. She had lost the security of going to her parents for support and didn't know what to do. It was almost time for her second baby to be born. When she went to pre-register at the hospital, they told her about Healthy Families, a voluntary home visitation program, funded by First Things First.

The program is designed to teach parents about developmental growth of kids under age 5, along with parenting skills. Urias thought to herself, "This was exactly what I need."

When Maylee was born, the baby was fussy and cried all the time. Urias also found herself losing her patience with both children. She didn't want to be that type of a mother, so she joined the Healthy Families program.

A parenting coach began weekly one-hour visits with Urias and the kids. The mom began to understand her baby's language and cues. Urias also learned developmental milestones her baby would reach every month.

The coach helped her plan ways to spend quality time with her children, which sometimes meant getting on the floor and playing and reading with both children.

Urias eventually reunited with her husband and both continued with parent coaching until Maylee turned 5 and graduated from the program. Her daughter was ready for kindergarten and had the skills to be successful in life.

Joseph is now 11 and Maylee is 8 years old, they both were well prepared for kindergarten, Urias said. They both learned to read very well and today are at grade level.

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